

## 2016 WIC Proposed Rule Changes – Retailer Impact Study

### Background:

The Women, Infant and Children's Supplemental Nutrition Program is an important source of food for many low- and middle income New Yorkers as well as an important source of income for retailers citywide. Recently, a federal [rule change](#) was [proposed](#) that is intended to increase access to healthy food by requiring that vendors accepting WIC stock a wider variety of food. Some observers fear that this change may favor larger stores, and have a negative impact on small retailers. Without evidence on either side of this debate we cannot know for certain what the impact of these changes will be and whether they will benefit or harm either WIC users or retailers.

### Description/Goals

Gather retailer perceptions and experiences on the impact of these changes in order to develop an evidence base on which to evaluate whether this policy is beneficial, to whom, and possible alternatives. What are the public policies that would incentivize retailers to participate, that would be supportive to healthy food access? Focus will begin in New York City and WIC specifically with possibility of expanding to other cities in New York State.

### Activities

#### Phase I:

- Convene stakeholders in partnership with the Healthy Food Retail Networking Group Advocacy Committee and do focus groups with business and nonprofit partners to look at barriers and facilitators of WIC and SNAP change (beyond April 18) (
- Review literature and other research – what is already known about impact of rule changes in stocking requirements?

#### Phase II:

- Identify and secure funding to conduct survey of store owners who are participants and non-participants of WIC

#### Phase III:

- Develop policy recommendations- city state and federal advocacy
- Disseminate and share findings via meetings and events, online via website, social media, and in formal policy briefs

### Fieldwork placement (180+ hours), 5-10 per week

April – August 2016 (potential to extend to Fall 2016 and beyond)

The newly formed CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute seeks master's level public health or associated student fieldwork placement to assist in a collaborative project to study newly proposed changes to The Women, Infant and Children's Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC). Students interested in policies and regulations around federal food programs and hunger in New York City are encouraged to apply. Previous experience in studying or working in food access, community health, antihunger or food security organizations and/or policy advocacy highly desirable. Good organizational, writing and analytic skills required. Study period begins in April and may continue through summer and into fall 2016 semester. Please send CV and cover letter summarizing qualifications and time availability to Ashley Rafalow at [Ashley.Rafalow@sph.cuny.edu](mailto:Ashley.Rafalow@sph.cuny.edu) by April 29.

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Resources:

National WIC Association 2017 Priorities

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/usda-rules-would-increase-food-stamp-access-to-healthy-foods/>